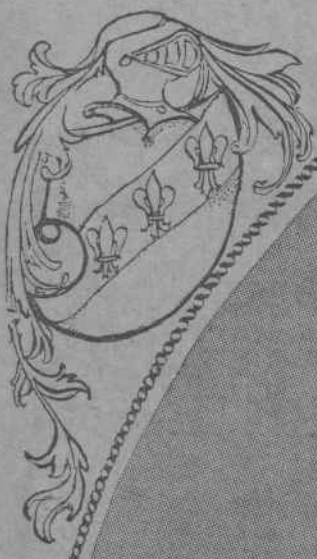


A Romance OF Tammany Hall, THE "400" AND THE French Nobility.

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THE
COUNTESS
DE
GABRIAC.



MRS
CLARENCE
ANDREWS



THE recent announcement that Mrs. Clarence Andrews was seeking a divorce from her husband has let out a secret—a secret that has been hidden from New York society for years. The divorce proceedings have caused quite a stir in the Four Hundred. But only to the profoundly initiated, have they recalled the memory of "Slippery Dick" Connolly, of Tammany and Tweed. An international romance of thrilling interest attaches to them. Mrs. Clarence Andrews—the beautiful Mrs. Clarence Andrews—is Slippery Dick's granddaughter. So is the beautiful Countess de Gabriac, of France.

When Mrs. Andrews married one of the most ornamental of New York's men about town, she entered a social milieu far removed from that of the noted Tweed Ring Comptroller. But the climax of social transformation was reached a year ago, when her sister married the Count Arthur de Gabriac, and thus became a grande dame of the Faubourg St. Germain, the wife of a son of the Crusaders and an eminent figure in the rigidly aristocratic society that perpetuates the memory of the ancient regime of France.

The curious thing is that these granddaughters of "Dick" Connolly are perfectly fitted to dominate the exalted regions which they have reached. They present a tantalizing problem to those who maintain that a certain kind of blood alone produces such fitness.

They have never unduly paraded their descent from "Dick" Connolly. In fact, it is generally understood in New York that Mrs. Clarence Andrews is descended from a noble but unfortunate Austrian family. In France it is generally understood that the Countess de Gabriac is the offspring of an enlightened and illustrious ornament of the American judiciary, who, in his turn, was of equally worthy descent.

The father of Mrs. Clarence Andrews and of the Countess Arthur de Gabriac was Mr. Joel Adams Fithian, who married Miss Fanny B. Connolly, the favorite daughter of the eminent Tammany Hall Comptroller. To that worthy's millions his descendants owe their social ascension and their present position. It is hardly fair that he should be ignored. His spirit, we may imagine, has writhed at the suggestion that he was an Austrian.

Mrs. Clarence Andrews is one of the most beautiful and brilliant women in New York. Her marriage seems to have been unfortunate, but that is merely an incident, and not an extremely important one in the career of a modern society woman. Her sister, the Countess Arthur de Gabriac, equally brilliant and beautiful, is a peerless star among the young matrons of the Faubourg St. Germain.

CHAPTER I.

The Rise of Richard B. Connolly.

Richard Barrett Connolly was born in Ireland, came to New York as a boy and there became a "boy" in a different sense. He rose high in the councils of old Tammany Hall, and in 1867, through the influence of William M. Tweed, became Comptroller of New York.

Connolly, Tweed and others formed the famous Tammany ring. It was Tweed who made out the enormous bills against the city and Connolly who enjoyed the subordinate but important function of ordering them to be paid.

In 1870 the enormous bills approved by the Board of Auditors began to attract unfavorable public notice. Vouchers against the city for hundreds grew to thousands, and from thousands to millions. It is said that Peter B. Sweeney remonstrated, but to no purpose, and the depletion of the treasury went on. Prominent capitalists examined the accounts of the Comptroller and certified to their correctness, and nothing more was said.

How the frauds were finally exposed through the claims of ex-Sheriff James O'Brien is ancient history.

Connolly was one of the first to be implicated. He refused to resign his office, but appointed an honest deputy, Andrew H. Green, and took the precaution to burn the fraudulent vouchers.

Finally he was forced to resign. He was then arrested, but was permitted to take up his quarters at the New York Hotel, where he remained in custody of several of the Sheriff's deputies, while endeavoring to obtain bail.

The amount required was \$1,000,000. Several days were spent by his friends in hunting this bail, but without success, and he was removed to Ludlow street jail.

On December 16, 1871, he was indicted for misdemeanor.

C. KRENSCHMIDT.



THE
CHATEAU
IN FRANCE.

His bail being reduced to one-half his relatives became his bondsmen, and he was released from arrest. He seized the opportunity to leave for foreign parts, and did not again return to this country. His disappearance seemed to justify the nickname of "Slippery Dick," which his enemies conferred on him.

CHAPTER II.

The Rise and Fall of the Connolly Family.

When Connolly was beginning to rise to wealth and fame as a politician he married Miss Maria Townsend, a clever and handsome woman of an old and distinguished New York family. It is a notable phenomenon that peccolant politicians of humble origin are often seized with the desire for social distinction. Tweed lived ostentatiously and appropriated the arms of the Marquises of Tweeddale. There are other examples. Connolly was one of them.

Perhaps he was merely trying to please his wife. She was poor, but of good family, and planned to make her husband's wealth give her social leadership. She made considerable progress in spite of the unfavorable comments on Mr. Tweed and Mr. Connolly by men who could not get an office. As long as they were not exposed they had plenty of friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Connolly had three children—two daughters and one son. One daughter married Robert C. Hutchings, who was surrogate of New York for a term. The son was named J. Townsend Connolly.

The other daughter, who is chiefly interesting, was originally named Fanny Barrett Connolly. She was beautiful and brilliant and ultimately became the mother of Mrs. Andrews and the Countess de Gabriac.

In 1866 Miss Fanny B. Connolly married Joel Adams Fithian, a young lawyer. He was poor, but his father-in-law procured for him the pleasant office of Receiver of Taxes in New York. Young Mr. and Mrs. Fithian lived with the Connollys at No. 55 East Thirty-eighth street and later transferred themselves to the new Connolly palace on Park avenue, a monument to the most successful period of the Tweed Ring.

In their yearning for respectability "Dick" Connolly and all his family at-

NAST'S
PORTRAIT OF
"DICK" CONNOLLY



HARPER'S WEEKLY
AUG. 26 1871.

tended Dr. E. H. Chapin's Universalist Church, which was then extremely fashionable and the newest thing in religion.

The indictment of Connolly and his hurried departure for Europe necessarily put an end for a time to the social career of his family in New York. But it did not end the ambition of his wife or daughter, Mrs. Fithian. They remembered that in Europe people do not inquire into the dreary details of New York politics, and that American millions will charm the most frigidly aristocratic circles.

According to men who have a vivid personal recollection of that time, "Dick" Connolly took away with him \$8,000,000 in United States Government bonds. This sum he divided equally among his three children. It is said he died almost penniless. His death occurred at Marseilles in 1880. Whether it was remorse for his misdeeds or the forcible separation from

the Connolly is somewhat mitigated by the dignity of the Townsend.

Mr. and Mrs. Fithian had four children—Mrs. Townsend Fithian, Fanny Barrett Fithian, Joel Remington Fithian and Richard Barrett Fithian. Note the exacting of Connolly in the last name. The great "Dick's" name was Richard Barrett Connolly.

For obvious reasons New York became distasteful to the Fithians. They determined to live a great deal abroad. Mrs. Fithian arranged for the education of her daughters in France, which was the most important thing she ever did, and is the original reason why this narrative comes to be written.

The ambitious mother succeeded in placing her two daughters in a convent school under the direction of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. It is in these establishments that the daughters of the highest aristocracy of France are educated.

The two girls received a splendid education, and what is more, they acquired the air and breeding peculiar to the noble daughters of France. To these qualifications they added a radiant beauty rare among the noble.

Not wishing to desert America altogether, Mr. and Mrs. Fithian bought a fine ranch near Santa Barbara, in Southern California. They divided their time between this place and Paris, where they had a splendid house at No. 24 Avenue Kleber.

They were intimate with the most aristocratic and fashionable circles of Paris. The Fithians spoke admirably of entertainments "chez le richissime Americain, M. J. Adams Fithian."

CHAPTER III.

The Ascent of the Connolly-Fithians.

A growing sense of the proprieties caused Mr. and Mrs. Joel A. Fithian to become Mr. and Mrs. J. Adams Fithian. At the same time a certain shyness concerning the name of Connolly became noticeable. The little Fithians might have murmured in the language of Mr. Bayly's old song:

"Oh, no, we never mention it,
That name is never heard;
Our lips are now forbid to speak
That once familiar word."

It is true that Mr. J. Townsend Connolly was and still is on earth, a gay boulevardier of Paris, but the grossness of

is usually to be found in the vicinity of the rich and fashionable.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews lived for three years in Paris and then came to New York. They had a little boy, who is now eight years old. In this city Mrs. Andrews was well received in society and her beauty created a sensation. The grand-paternal Connolly was never mentioned or thought of. She had lately studied music in Vienna. She had a strong foreign accent and some kind friends reported that she belonged to a noble Austrian family.

Her marriage with Clarence Andrews has not proved a success, as is clearly shown by the fact that she is seeking a divorce.

CHAPTER V.

Miss Fanny Fithian Becomes the Countess de Gabriac.

The culminating glory of the house of Connolly-Fithian was attained a year ago when the youngest daughter, Fanny, married the Count Arthur de Gabriac, son of the Marquis and Marquise de Gabriac.

The family of de Gabriac is one of the most ancient and honored in France. D'Hozier assigns it an authentic ascent to the tenth century. It has proof of participation in the Crusades.

The father of Count Arthur was formerly French Ambassador to Rome. The bridegroom was born in the Eternal City, and was there confirmed by the Pope himself. Curiously enough he has an American grandmother. Another Count de Gabriac married Miss Florence Phalen, of New York, and their daughter married her cousin, the Marquis de Gabriac, head of the family and father of the young nobleman who has just become the husband of Miss Fithian. Count Arthur is a cousin of the Count de Castellane, who married Miss Anna Gould.

The wedding invitation read thus:
Monsieur et Madame J. Adams Fithian ont l'honneur de vous faire part du mariage de Mademoiselle Fanny Fithian, leur fille, avec le Comte Arthur de Gabriac.

El vous prient d'assister a la benediction nuptiale qui leur sera donnee le jeudi, 28 Octobre, 1897, a midi tres-precis, en l'Eglise Saint-Honore d'Eylau.

23 Avenue Kleber.

Saint Honore d'Eylau, where the religious ceremony occurred, has seen the union of more ancient houses than any church in Paris. The witnesses for the bride were General Horace Porter, United States Ambassador to France, and Mr. Chester Alan Arthur; for the bridegroom, the Marquis de Monteynard and Count Joseph de Gabriac, his brother.

The bride was led to the altar by her father. She wore an exquisite robe of white supple moire, trimmed with flourishes of beautiful old point round the long square train, of the tablier and upon the corsage, arranged en echin, attached on the left side with a cluster of orange flowers. The point lace veil was surmounted by a countess's coronet of orange flowers set rather far back, the veil flowing down gracefully on to the moire train.

Then came the bridegroom, leading his mother, the Marquise de Gabriac, attired in deep blue velvet, with jeweled corsage front and blue velvet bonnet, trimmed with crease and orange aigrette, followed by the Marquis de Gabriac and Mrs. Fithian, the latter wearing a lovely dress of white satin, covered with Chantilly and embroidered on the corsage with jewels and pearls. Her bonnet of silver, embroidery was ornamental with yellow and mandarin bows affixed by diamond ornaments.

Then followed Mrs. Clarence Andrews, sister of the bride, exquisitely dressed in silver gray tulle de velours, embroidered with gray velvet rouleaux and silver thread, in a design of trefle and revers of velvet, and collar of Venetian point. Her becoming hat of soft gray velvet, was raised with shaded plumes to match. Mrs. Andrews leaned on the arm of Count Joseph de Gabriac.

The mass was said by the cure of Saint Honore d'Eylau and the Reverend Pere de Gabriac pronounced the nuptial benediction.

His Holiness the Pope sent his blessing to the young couple, the message being read in church by the Reverend Pere de Gabriac, who also congratulated Miss Fithian on having adopted her husband's religion.

Since then Mr. Fithian has died at Santa Barbara. His wife is now in Paris and his daughter, the Countess de Gabriac, is one of the most beautiful ornaments of that city's society. Such is the astonishing history up to this time of the descendants of "Slippery Dick" Connolly.

TAMMANY
HALL

